

THE
ANTI-INFIDEL
AND
RELIGIOUS ADVOCATE.

"It is a duty we owe to God, as the fountain and author of all truth, who is Truth itself, and it is a duty also we owe ourselves, if we deal candidly and sincerely with our own souls, to have our minds constantly disposed to entertain and receive truth wheresoever we meet with it, or under whatever appearance."—*Locke*.

No. 8.

JULY 22nd, 1831.

3d.

THE ORIGINAL PROMULGATION OF
CHRISTIANITY.

In some antecedent essays we have, from a variety of incontrovertible testimonies, attempted to demonstrate that the advent of the Messiah was predicted before its alleged occurrence, and that the appearance of a person assuming that name and mission, is a matter of historical reality,—an event supported by the most positive attestation. In the present paper we shall consider the mode in which that pretended mission was introduced, and endeavour to ascertain whether it is credible, or opposed to belief.

That at the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, and at the period which immediately followed it, there were many who had been led to adopt the religion which he propagated, is a fact for which we have the most demonstrative evidence. The reception of his doctrines must have had some beginning, and that which extended to many have been originally addressed to a comparatively few. Now, that he who makes extraordinary pretensions, who advances that which is opposed to the peculiar persuasion and manners of the age, and who assumes a supernatural source for the doctrines which he publishes, should ex-

VOL. I.—No. VIII.

cite a degree of suspicion which nothing but powerful and direct evidence could subdue, is so accordant with the ordinary proceedings of mankind, and with those demands for suitable tests when uncommon allegations are made, as not to need any lengthened demonstration. At the time when Jesus Christ appeared, the general state of the human mind was such as to render it impervious to those assumptions the proof of which was not addressed to the senses. It has, indeed, been alleged, with much useless assurance, that ignorance exposes to delusion, and that as they to whom Christianity was originally presented were illiterate and obscure, the certainty of their being the subjects of imposition is demonstrated: but the less the possession of knowledge, the the greater dependance of reason upon the senses; and as the degree of intelligence does not affect the power of sight, touch, or hearing, he that worked conviction in such a state must have appealed to the test of the senses,—must have gained access to the mind by the only or principal avenue which was then open.

If, therefore, Jesus Christ appeared when, between the principles which he designed to propagate and the perceptive faculties of the general mind,

there was an intervention of ignorance and prejudice; if he taught doctrines relatively or positively opposed to those in which his hearers had been educated; if he asserted that which did not accord with common experience, and was thus certain to incur common rejection or doubt; if he proposed that which mankind would deem impossible or unlikely; if, in short, he attempted to develop a supernatural religion to beings who had little mental ability or moral inclination to receive or appreciate its truth; could such a person have produced belief, or such a religion have obtained credence, unless he had addressed those physical perceptions, the evidence of which men do not generally disrespect or deny? To suppose that proselytes were rapidly and extensively obtained by the declarations which did not promise present advantage, which involved and proclaimed supernatural intervention, and forewarned their receivers of impending persecution and death, as the consequences of their reception; to suppose that with all these acknowledged disadvantages he could have established the reality of his mission without that exertion of superhuman power which he declared himself to possess, and to which he appealed, or that that power could be attested by anything but a sensible display, is to imagine that which is morally impossible. Extraordinary conviction results from extraordinary evidence alone. He who proclaims that which involves supernatural power, must attest his assertions by open and irrefragable demonstrations, or the effect, if he produce any, must be superficial and fleeting indeed. The credibility of the miraculous event is enforced by the extent and rapidity of the effect which it produced; for that which is dubious and impotent is not likely to subvert previous inclination, habit, and belief.

That Jesus Christ produced an extraordinary effect upon those among

whom he preached, is certain from the deadly hostility which his actions excited among the Jews. Had he been a vapouring enthusiast whose assertions were unsustained by proof, and between whose words and actions flagrant discrepancy was obvious, his efforts to impose would never have produced results which aroused the jealousy of the high priests. His arguments and influence were obnoxious, not because they were infirm and ineffective, but because they were convincing and powerful, and urged by that evidence which nothing but the eye of evil could see and resist. The radical and undeniable power which Jesus Christ displayed in confirmation of that religion and morality which he taught and enforced, is the only natural and probable source from which the vengeance of the Jews can be consistently deduced. That an impotent juggler, practising mere tricks which many in each assembly could have detected and exposed, should have consternated a large body of men, who thence resolved that his contemptible performance should be visited with death, so militates against probability that it may be pronounced one of those extreme and contrary deductions which candour and reason would never sanction or believe. A regard for their own credit would have prevented the Jews from displaying a temerity or revenge of which acknowledged imposture or buffoonery was the explicit and exciting cause.

The credence which Jesus Christ obtained, which implies a subduction of resistance before assent was yielded or new truths perceived and confessed, admits of but one rational solution. Something was performed as well as asserted, and truth was rendered more impressive and certain in clouded minds by the intervention of a miraculous sign.

We mean not to assert that truth was created by miracles, or that the veracity of Jesus Christ would have

been essentially imperfect or destroyed had they not been performed. When Revealed Religion had been once implanted, or excited attention and assent by the truths it revealed, the force of its prophetic and internal evidence would have secured its gradual extension; but this would have divested it of that adapted power which gave it a more immediate effect, and rendered its progress more rapid and its benefits more near. Miracles, therefore, independent of the divine power which their performance implies, were suitable to the peculiar state of the people among whom they were presented. They were the attesting concomitants of divine truth.

How consonant therefore do the effects of the original introduction of Christianity appear with their alleged cause! To mankind, whose understandings were obscured by estrangement from God, truth was presented in connection with those external attestations which facilitated its reception in the human mind; the exalted excellence of the doctrines of Jesus Christ was announced by a display of omnipotent power; and hence did he gain disciples, and his Gospel an extension which received its commanding impulse from those supernatural works by which his words were publicly attested.

The effects which Christianity produced were extraordinary and sudden. Among multitudes, before immersed in the darkness and confusion of idolatry, and debased by the indulgence of the grossest superstition and sensuality, there at once arose men who returned to the belief of one God, and who, in consequence of what they had heard and believed, displayed a purity of life which rendered them objects of eminent envy and persecution. That there was something extraordinary in this sudden renovation of their religious faith and conduct, none can deny: but to attribute it to mere accident or delusion, to causes which all, instead of a comparatively few

men might have called into action by their own volition, independent of any extraneous supernatural power, instead of referring, as the disciples did, to a miraculous intervention of God for human restoration, is perhaps as great an inconsistency as any which the understanding of man could ever display.

But not by the Jews or the Romans, —not by those who had the power of immediate observation and scrutiny, are the miracles of Jesus Christ suspected or denied. They, by whom the falsehood of dishonest assumption would have been instantly detected had its existence at that period been in the least ambiguous or obscure, acknowledge what they had not the power to deny; and attribute the influence which Jesus Christ produced on his immediate disciples to his preaching and the wonderful works which he publicly performed. Epictetus, Marcus Antoninus, and Galeo, testify the effect which Christianity produced on its early receivers. Lucian, who displayed an inveterate hostility to the revelation and followers of Jesus Christ, observes, that he was crucified, that his disciples had a strong belief in immortal life, that they endured persecution, contempt, and death, with constancy and hope, and that their numbers were multiplied and great.

As an historical fact, therefore, the original promulgation of Christianity is abundantly attested: and we have already alluded to the cause by which this extraordinary revolution in the opinion and lives of multitudes was probably or certainly produced. There is not a shadow of testimony that Jesus Christ did not perform the miracles which are ascribed to him by the evangelical writers; and the whole objection to them is thence based in sceptical surmise. But while testimony is silent on the non-performance of the gospel miracles, it is not so on the converse side of the question. It is positively asserted, implied, or admitted in a variety of ways by nume-

rous writers; and this testimony is strengthened by the improbability of any system being rapidly introduced in that state of the world when Christianity was presented without the intervention of miraculous agency or sensible demonstration. It is contrary to experience and to human reason to infer, that a man who made extraordinary pretensions, and appealed to visible acts, should have convinced multitudes of their truth and reality without attesting them by ocular proof. The open disclosure of new doctrines and the profession of extraordinary power, would provoke the popular mind to desire a sign, and suggest to it a kind and degree of evidence without the exhibition of which the popular belief would never have been obtained.

Thus, if the whole of the circumstances be comprehensively surveyed, only one conclusion can be honestly deduced,—that Christianity was introduced and sustained in a miraculous manner, and displayed that evidence which imposture never yet counterfeited or supplied. On this subject, however, we shall subsequently enlarge, and consider some further sophistical objections, the invalidity of which we hope to display.

MEMOIR OF THE REV. ALEXANDER WAUGH.

THE connexion of Mr. Waugh with the religious institutions of the metropolis was so extensive, and was continued so long, that his name is familiar with most of those who are interested in the propagation of Revealed Religion; while his life supplies so many points of good example and Christian virtue, that we trust a brief outline of his character and career will not be unacceptable to our readers.

Alexander Waugh was born on the 16th of August, 1754, at East Gordon, a village in Berwickshire. His pa-

rents were small farmers, a class in Scotland who have long been eminently known for their general seriousness and propriety of life. The father and mother of the subject of our sketch were pious and exemplary characters, and the principles of the parents were at an early age infused and developed in their son. Alexander, the youngest of the family, was at an early age designed for the ministry; and he received the first elements of his education at the parochial school at Gordon. At the commencement of the year 1766, he was removed to Earlston, a neighbouring parish, in the school of which the master was celebrated as a classical instructor. Here he made rapid progress in Greek and Latin, in the latter of which he was soon advanced beyond his school-fellows. In 1770 he joined the secession church, and during the same year he entered the university of Edinburgh. In this public seminary he had the advantage of being instructed by some of the most eminent professors which Scotland has produced.

After a four years' residence at Edinburgh, Mr. Waugh was examined by the Presbytery, relative to his acquisitions in languages and philosophy, which being highly creditable, he was admitted as a student of divinity in 1774, under the tuition of the Rev. J. Brown, the esteemed annotator of the Bible. In 1777 he went to the university of Aberdeen, and, for a session, attended the lectures of Drs. Beattie and Campbell, who gave signal refutations to that sophistry with which Hume endeavoured to subvert the truth of Religion and the very foundations of social virtue. On Mr. Waugh's application to Dr. Beattie he was found amply qualified for the degree of A.M., which he took in April, 1778. During this period, he acquired much valuable information in every department of literature, while the amiability of his disposition and life gain-

ed him many admirers and friends. The principal difficulty which he about this time felt, was in composition, which rendered him doubtful whether he should ever be able to produce respectable sermons. That knowledge and the power of communicating it are not always possessed in the same degree, is a truth abundantly attested; and deficiency in the latter is probably in general produced by giving a too exclusive employment to the thinking and recollective faculties, while excoitation is rarely, if ever, excited. Thus knowledge may swell in the mind, like a cork in a bottle; it is in, but cannot come forth without difficulty and force. However, Mr. Waugh conquered his supposed difficulty, and acquired a very persuasive expression and respectable style. Having determined on the clerical profession, and gone through the common probationary steps, he was licensed by the Presbytery of Edinburgh in June, 1779, and in two months after, he was appointed to supply the secession congregation in Wells Street, London. Here he was cordially received and much admired. He shortly afterwards, however, returned to Scotland, when he was appointed pastor over a small congregation at Newtown, in the parish of Melrose, in Roxburghshire: but the favourable impression he had made on the congregation at Wells Street, caused them, in May, 1781, to call upon him to assume the pastoral charge of their church. This, however, from some very conscientious reasons, he at that time declined; and another application, in the same year, shared the same fate. When the ministry of an established and extensive congregation in a large metropolis was offered to a man who presided over a small flock in a remote village in Scotland, the purity of his motives scarcely need be mentioned. But on a third invitation, pressed with more earnestness in the succeeding year, he accepted the charge in London,

over which he so long presided. In Newtown he left the most affectionate remembrance of his character and services. For sometime after his arrival in London, he devoted himself to the renovation and extension of his previous literary acquirements. In our brief space we are compelled to omit many particulars which might be interesting to our readers. Shortly after the period we last mentioned, he lost his father. In 1783 he revisited Scotland, and in a few years afterwards he married; the lady of his choice proving a very pious and affectionate partner. In 1791 he narrowly escaped a grave in the ocean, in returning from Yorkshire to London. After reaching London, he experienced considerable indisposition, and had recourse to his native air for recovery.

In the year 1793, a body of Christian Ministers, including several denominations, established the Evangelical Magazine, in which undertaking Mr. Waugh evinced earnest interest, and contributed many admired papers. Not long after its establishment, Mr. Waugh, in connexion with several others, projected the Missionary Society. In forming its constitution, Dr. Waugh endeavoured to inweave it with a truly catholic spirit, and in the discourse which he preached for its second anniversary, he still endeavoured to enforce that principle of harmony by which the scattered energies of many may be collected into one focal and multiplied power. That he who was such an advocate of unity should have been a peace-maker, may be naturally inferred; and so far was Dr. Waugh actuated by this disposition, which is made the subject of an especial blessing by our Lord, that it prevailed in all his communications, more or less, and it was declared by the much-esteemed Mr. Burder, "that on all occasions, for thirty years, Dr. Waugh was uniformly 'the peace-maker.'" In the year 1802 he visited Paris, by direction of the Missionary So-

ciety, to ascertain the state of religion in those parts; and the account which he gave of his tour exhibits a brilliant and inquisitive mind.

Increasing physical infirmities compelled him, in 1805, to suspend his assistance in those missionary services in which he had been previously employed; but in the year 1809, and subsequently, he was again engaged in this occupation, and in this capacity he visited Ireland in 1812, and Scotland in 1815. For twenty-eight years he sat as chairman of the Examining Committee of the Missionary Society, which office he discharged with credit to his piety and talent. In such a varied round of usefulness, whether as a pastor, a missionary, or the functionary of a religious society, was his life passed from his coming to London till the close. In the November of 1827, he suffered indisposition from cold, and on the 9th of December he officiated for the last time in the public ministry. His disorder hence assumed a severe character; fever ensued, and on the Thursday of the same week he died the death of the righteous, surrounded by his family.

After the preceding sketch, the character of Dr. Waugh will not require a detailed illustration. He was born and educated in a country where there has been for years a preponderating influence of knowledge and religion, and where the habits of the mind are more strictly formed than in England. We of course make this as the assertion of a general truth. Dr. Waugh hence exhibited a corresponding regularity and order of mind and action. As a pastor, he was constant in his endeavours to benefit his flock, and to adapt his sermons to the peculiar state of his auditories. His pulpit style was simple, yet forcible and dignified, and frequently brightened by those allusions which evinced that he had an imagination susceptible of the beauty which nature presents. His endeavours to aid those institutions which

had the promotion of the Gospel for their objects, declare the practical value which he attached to the Word of God and Christianity. As a husband, father, and friend, his character was exemplary. He was affectionate, generous, and judicious; and the monument which his congregation have erected to his memory, bespeaks the high estimation in which he was held by a people who had known him for nearly half a century.

THE INSANITY OF PRIDE.

AMONG the various attestations of man's degraded nature, none is more frequently witnessed than Pride, or that inflated opinion of self-excellence which imagines the inferiority of all with whom it is associated. The modes in which this feeling is manifested, are as numerous as absurd, and demonstrate the pettiness and insanity of the cause from which they originate. The accidental gifts of fortune, which have been received by chance, and not acquired by industry; hereditary distinctions which are attached prior to individual assent or merit; hypothetical superiority of mind or carriage, and an alleged delicacy of perception, which discovers and is disgusted with all that is determined as vulgar or low, are some of the principal common sewers through which this moral filth is transmitted: and so epidemical is the contagion which it generates that few classes are exempt from its influence, although its folly is as universally acknowledged and denounced.

Those whom a certain class of circumstances has elevated above the necessity of personal exertion, easily fall into the delusion of supposing themselves independent; and hence infer the right of declaring, by indifference or contempt, the superior gentility of an ample purse, and the obligation of respect and obedience which that imposes on the poorer, more industrious; or infirm: those

distinguished by rank are commonly anxious to be eminent for their condescension, or that supererogatory kindness which lowers itself to assumed affability with those in lower grades of life: while those whose pride arises from fancied superiority of mind or manners, found their claims of insolence on that which is equally alien from reason, justice, and piety.

If we examine this vice by a physical and religious criterion, its absurd and malicious nature will become very obvious and disgusting. As animal wants continue through every imaginable grade of society; as the back requires raiment, the stomach food, and the whole body shelter, and as these are indispensable, and not supplied by the spontaneous gifts of unassisted nature, the hypothesis of independence is at once confuted and demonstrated as insane. The physical exigences must be somehow provided, for indolence or wealth do not abate the importunity of corporeal want; and thence those whom money causes to do nothing are in reality the most dependant on the exertion of their fellow-creatures. Those who would justify or excuse Pride by the allegation of superior affluence, should learn to live without food, or shelter, or human aid, before they exult in the independence of their possessions. Those on whom temporal distinction is conferred by hereditary descent have no claim on general esteem unless title is allied with ordinary or superior virtue; but too often are they discovered as licensing the abuse of increased power and responsibility. As wealth, distinction, or superiority of intellect, are not of the radical creation of humanity; as the foolish may be affluent, the titled be conspicuous for vice, and as the lot of understanding is not drawn by individual choice, it is difficult to imagine how any having such obvious facts before them can indulge the inflations of an ignorant and groundless Pride. Reason and nature militate

against it whenever their genuine dictates are not suppressed.

But if Pride be viewed in connection with religion; if the uncompromising voice of divine truth be allowed to describe its nature; instead of appearing as an evidence of human greatness, it will be seen as an awful indication of spiritual weakness or depravity. The physical dependance of man on the fruits of the earth is every day attested; but the Bible goes further, and declares his moral dependance on the Great Author of being. Whatever he may possess in this world, however he may be connected with wealth or rank, or distinguished by superior endowments of mind, the whole of man's possessions is derived from Another, and is not created by himself. The earth was formed and fruitful before he was formed, and his personal inability to supply his wants without extraneous aid, was thus declared at the earliest point of his intended or actual being; while his spiritual dependance on the Father of light is most solemnly declared in the pages of inspiration. But not only is simple helplessness there affirmed; the corruptions of the will and affections are also revealed; and such is the state of human defection, that nothing but a new-birth can render him capable of the enjoyment of heaven, for "Out of the heart proceed murders, adulteries, and uncleanness."

If man be thus physically dependant and morally depraved; if his bodily welfare is supplied by a multitude of contributions over which he has no radical controul; if in the eyes of a perfect Creator he is spiritually impure; can anything be more ridiculous in one case, or wicked in the other, than indulging in an arrogance which could not be justly allied even with human perfection? Nothing can be more removed from wisdom, or opposed to the advance of goodness, than that self-sufficient Pride which is constantly gloating on its imagined

excellences, while in reality it is poor, and weak, and hungry, and naked; which compares its own dignity with the degradation of others, and is too much delighted with its own splendour to suspect its own fallacy, or think improvement necessary or possible.

Among those who disregard or reject Revelation, Pride is expected and natural. He who does not profess to regulate his heart and life by the wisdom of God, may be somewhat excused for a fault which he does not analyse or suspect; and he by whom Revelation is denied will disbelieve what it alleges of the necessity of a regeneration of the heart, and a subjugation of human arrogance. But when professing Christians indulge in that which their creed condemns; when pride and self-conceit are displayed through a multitude of modes which reason forbids and religion would destroy, profession must be detached from principle, and be attributed to accident rather than conviction,—to superficial assent rather than to an earnest belief of the necessity of repentance and new life. To oppose this vice, to convict it of guilt and folly in its most incipient developments, and to give a constant warning of its existence and devastating nature, is the solemn and permanent duty of Christian pastors. If man at his best estate is but vanity; if iniquity cleave even to his holy acts; if he be, what observation declares, an imperfect and sinful being, should he be allowed, without warning and admonition, to aggravate actual sin by the evil of constant arrogance? "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." "Except ye receive the kingdom of heaven as a little child, ye shall in nowise enter therein." Against pride and self-inflation these are surely affecting and solemn declamations; and he who strives to multiply their influence in his heart is in the surest way to wisdom and blessedness.

DIVINE CONTRIVANCE FOR HUMAN HAPPINESS.

CONTRIVANCE proves design, and the predominant tendency of the contrivance indicates the disposition of the designer. The world abounds in contrivances; and all the contrivances with which we are acquainted are directed to beneficial purposes. Evil, no doubt, exists; but is never, that we can perceive, the object of contrivance. Teeth are contrived to eat, not to ache; their aching now and then is incidental to the contrivance, perhaps inseparable from it; or even, if you will, let it be called a defect in the contrivance; but it is not the *object* of it. This is a distinction which well deserves to be attended to. In describing implements of husbandry, you would hardly say of the sickle that it is made to cut the reaper's fingers, though, from the construction of the instrument, and the manner of using it, this mischief often happens. But if you had occasion to describe instruments of torture or execution, this engine, you would say, is to extend the sinews; this to dislocate the joints; this to break the bones; this to scorch the soles of the feet. Now nothing of this sort is to be found in the works of nature. We never discover a train of contrivances to bring about an evil purpose. No anatomist ever discovered a system of organization calculated to produce pain or disease; or, in explaining the parts of the human body, ever said, this is to irritate; this to inflame; this duct is to convey gravel to the kidneys; this gland to secrete the humour which forms the gout. If by chance he comes to a part of which he knows not the use, the most that he can say is, that it is useless. No one ever suspects that it is put there to incommode, to annoy, or to torment. Since God, then, has called forth his consummate wisdom to contrive and provide for our happiness, and the world appears to have been

constituted with this design at first so long as this constitution is up-holden by him, we must in reason suppose the same design to exist — *Paley*.

DEISM CONSIDERED.

DEISM is that theological belief which admits the being of a God, but denies the existence of a specific revelation from him. It maintains that natural religion, and the light of human inference from the visible objects of creation, are sufficient for every moral purpose, and for the production of happiness in a future state, if there should happen to be one. To such a creed no one would object, were it efficient in performing what it proposes, and were there no other known system more definite and certain in its requirements and declarations. To believe that there is a God, that he is good, and that human beings should imitate his spirit and imitate his perfections, is at least harmless if not beneficial. The proposition is good; but it is the influential sanction, the authority from which such a belief is likely to receive a practical and constant enforcement, which is to be scrutinized and determined.

Now assuming that natural religion had always produced a uniform and relatively good effect, still it must be admitted that conjecture, inference, or hypothesis, forms so large a portion of its character, that, independent of the demonstration which nature gives of the existence of a God, it supplies no definite rule of life and action which is stamped with certainty as pleasing in his sight, or productive of the highest and most enlarged moral perfection. Whatever may be the positive or relative excellence of the criterion of action which natural religion may establish or suppose, it must be the result of inquiry and speculation; and therefore be supported only by human sentiment and deduction.

But the uncertainty of deduction,

and the contingent importance of the authority which it might supply, are not only insufficient to produce any certain beneficial result, but their effect, whatever might be its nature, would be necessarily limited to a very few. For every human being to infer the moral cause by which his actions should be regulated; to balance duty and inclination, and ascertain the extended result of certain actions and the latent influence of certain motives, is a position which we need not discuss, because the occurrence of such a state seems impossible; and were the general aspect of society to be modified, or, rather, distorted, by such a multitude of speculative individuals, it would soon be overwhelmed with the most distracting confusion. An inferred natural religion, with no acknowledged authority but individual assent, caused by individual deduction, could not, were its principles carried into universal operation, produce advantage; and were its influence to direct individual conduct, confusion must ensue, because no two men would make the same deduction or infer the same obligation, from one given class of natural evidence. In its details, therefore, the system of natural, or physically deduced religion, seems insufficient for that which it proposes. It seems to give a tacit licence to every individual inclination, to impose no sufficient general restraint, and thence to have a tendency to dissolve the cohesion of society.

That Deism, or natural religion, has produced no general amelioration in any age or nation, is a notorious fact. The belief in some kind of Deity has been held from the earliest antiquity of which we have any notice; and yet that mere belief has never been attended with any wide diffusion of moral purity. Rome and Greece, in the zenith of their intellectual splendour, were replete with tolerated abominations; and their philosophers lamented a universal depravity which they confessed them-

selves unable to cure or restrain. Regarded in the spirit of philosophy and candour, natural Religion must hence appear ineffective in its general power to control human action, or purify human motive. Whatever it might do for the retired and contemplative man; however research might convince him of the wisdom and power of the Deity, and casual impulse attempt to unite religious devotion to his admiration of the works of God, such an effect could never be supposed to be rendered common or certain amongst a multitude whose occupations and habits were the very reverse of those which brought him to a sense of natural religion. As the causes operating in the supposed cases would be different, there would be a difference of effect; and while the more advantageous one produced an expansion of the faculties of the mind, and an improvement in the dispositions of the heart, the other must, as it has done, leave man a sensual, savage, and abandoned being.

To reveal a system for the regulation and guidance of all, and to demonstrate its truth and excellence by suitable evidence, is the only way in which the moral and religious interests of man can be preserved and extended. Mankind require a code of doctrines whose unerring authority shall be established without any prolix logical investigation; and that which is once established as true, must be more satisfactory and influential than a thousand arguments whose validity is not practically seen, or whose authority is too questionable or indirect to be admitted.

Whatever objection may therefore be made to any alleged revelation, the insufficiency of natural religion will ever stand as an immutable fact, while regarded in connection with the past and present condition of humanity. Deism, indeed, is far too contingent on the caprices of human will, too easily accommodated in its practical dictates to an accordance with the predominant

passions, to have that direct power to control and purify the heart, which is so requisite in a system for the regulation of mankind. It is possessed of but one definite truth,—the existence of a God, and its subsequent deductions merge into that generalism which, because it is unconditional, may invite universal assent, and is approved more for its negative than its influential character. Though indifference quenches hope, it also allays inquietude; and that which imposes the least restraint will be best liked by those whose dispositions cannot endure a strict discipline and subjugation of the heart. But let natural inclination be suspected.

[To be continued.]

THE PULPIT OBSERVER.

THE REV. MR. CHESNUT.

At St. Mark's, Kennington, the Rev. Mr. Chesnut, on Sunday morning, delivered a Lecture from 1 Thess. i. 3: "Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of our God and Father." Religion, the preacher observed, was spiritual and connected with the inward affections; but although it could not be discovered by the bodily senses, the text implied that it would be manifested in the life were it was in reality possessed. Hypocrites and enthusiasts might attempt to deceive themselves by the supposition that, as it was a matter of conscience, and strictly between God and man, that it could not be ascertained by external indications: but faith would produce corresponding works, and truth be shown forth in the labours of love. Charity was a working grace. The possession of other graces, however, would induce that of hope. Mr. Chesnut then took a three-fold view in reference to the nature of hope, its contrast with despondency, and its peculiar office or effect.

Hope was an anticipation of future good, and the promises of God were those by which it ought to be peculiarly excited, and produce an undoubting confidence. The

Rev. Gentleman then drew the distinction between faith and hope. Of the existence of heaven and hell he was positively assured by the Word of God; and if he received that inspired testimony, which could not be justly doubted, he must believe a future state of rewards and punishments. Heaven and hell were thus objects of positive belief or faith with every Christian; but it was not so in reference to the hope of obtaining the one and escaping the other. In this there was no definite individual assurance, because the terms on which they would be enjoyed or suffered were conditional, and unless fulfilled, fear must supersede expectation: but hope still buoyed up the Christian in efforts to obtain a living faith and practice.

The distinction between hope and despondency was then adduced and illustrated. In the darkest hour of affliction, hope would not forsake man; and in this its constancy, value, and advantage, were seen. Hope cheered while despondency depressed the energies of man. Thus in the heathen fable, when all the evils were let loose from the fatal box, hope still remained at the bottom. Mr. Chesnut observed, however, that hope might be detrimental to human happiness when it was excessive and unfounded. Extravagant expectations as they included a greater number of objects, had their contingencies multiplied, and thence exposed man to a greater liability to disappointment. Disappointment would, indeed, necessarily attend vain expectations of temporal enjoyment; for no earthly things could satisfy the vast desires of an immortal spirit. The gospel of Jesus Christ alone supplied the proper objects for rational hope. To this elevating and sufficient hope, men were invited by God, in every page of Revelation. As one strong and convincing test that hope which was encouraged by God, Mr. Chesnut remarked, that God never despaired of human salvation; he did not despond; but constantly endeavoured to effect it by means of his Holy Word and Spirit.

The general office of hope was next described. It taught us to rely on the promises of God, and was appropriately represented as the anchor by which a ship was secured in the midst of a stormy sea. In the midst of changes it enabled the Christian to remain unshaken, and to

pierce through the dark clouds with which he might be surrounded to brighter and serener skies. Here it would see things which the telescope could never discover or explore; and even death was divested of terror by the influence of hope; for eye had not seen, nor ear heard, nor had it entered into the heart of man to conceive, the blessedness that awaited the sincere Christian in a future and eternal state. Mr. Chesnut then observed, that hope would have a considerable influence in stimulating to prayer; for if we desired, if we hoped for the happiness of heaven, we should certainly not be reluctant in supplicating the means to attain it. Prayer, he said, was the medium of communion with the invisible world. Mr. Chesnut concluded his discourse, after remarking that though disappointment might be endured, it should always be remembered that God educed good out of seeming evil, and that we had even in this state a knowledge of the benefit which disappointment and trial produced in the Christian character and determination, and that in a future state our perception of the dealings of Providence would be refined and extended.

THE REV. MR. KENT.

THE above Rev. Gentleman, who presides over an Independent congregation at Trowbridge, delivered a Lecture on Sunday evening, at the Islington Chapel. He took Gal. i. 15, 16 as a text, "But when it pleased God to separate me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood." He commenced his discourse by observing that the lives of holy men were intended for our edification, by the influence of example: but although that was their designed practical end, it was too often neglected; and men were contented with admiring without imitating those whom they conceived to be great prodigies in religious history, with whom it would be impossible or irreverent for modern Christians to endeavour to vie. But if the public were separated from the private character of these great agents in the spread of Chris-

tianity, they would be found the subjects of divine grace, in which they might be set by the side of modern believers; for there was but one Father of them all. Mr. Kent then described the analogy existing between the conversion of Paul and the conversion of believers at the present day, and proposed to trace its cause, nature, and consequence.

The cause he described as arising from the pleasure or will of God, the love of which must excite our admiration. It was known to the Almighty that Paul would be a great agent in the ministry previously to Divine Truth calling him to it at the appointed time, and by the appointed means; for He who contemplated all his works, had everything present at once in the eternal mind. Hence Saul of Tarsis was not only an appointed but an adapted apostle for Christianity. His profound learning and knowledge of the Jewish traditions rendered him, in several respects, eligible for that state of the ministry: but all that Paul enjoyed, like present believers, was a privilege from God.

The nature of the conversion was next alluded to by Mr. Kent. "It pleased God to call." To call, was to speak in a commanding voice; and the same call that was given to the Great Apostle of the Gentiles, was likewise given to all in the Gospel: but this invitation or commandment was resisted by the prejudices of the human mind, till it came under the influence of Divine Grace. All saving knowledge was in Christ; we ought to consider this in reference to our own case: and we thence found in Revelation a general description presented of the power and riches of the Redeemer. If we heard of an earthly monarch we desired to know his character, strength, and the amount of his revenue; and there was corresponding information given respecting the kingdom and attributes of Jesus Christ. As the sun was the source of light and heat to the material world, so was Jesus Christ to the heavenly world. In further reference to this part of his subject, Mr. Kent remarked that man was represented as having two senses of hearing and seeing; the one relating to the external or natural man, and the other to the internal or spiritual man. This was a fact known to all believers, who

found that Revelation must not be made to but *in* them. If Christianity revealed the awful realities of the eternal world, it must penetrate to the will, and not only propose a system of theology, but influence the affections of the heart, and its celestial principles must be allowed to operate.

In describing the consequences of conversion, Mr. Kent remarked, in reference to the assumption of the ministerial function, that preparation was required. Moses and the prophets, it might be discovered, underwent a state of preparation; John was in the wilderness; and Jesus Christ was thirty years in the world before he began to preach. It was indeed evident that the principles and habits ought to be purified and confirmed before any one entered on such a holy office. But the conversion of the Christian would involve sacrifices: and here the example of the apostle should be remembered. When his conversion was effected, when he was miraculously convinced of divine truth, he adopted it immediately; he consulted no friend, for the least hesitation might have impeded or subverted his resolution. Religion was a personal thing, and friends would not be able to account for the faults which they might cause to be committed. Christians must not flinch from consequences, nor Divine Truth be sacrificed to private interests or feelings. The analogy, indeed, between the conversion of the apostle and the conversion of Christians ought constantly to be remembered. To consult friends who have a reverence for what their forefathers believed or did, and thence to shut their hearts against amendment on the score of antiquity was an infirm argument. If new discoveries were made, and their utility and superiority demonstrated, it was drivelling idiotism to reject their adoption; and so it was in relation to the practical adoption of Christianity. Nothing was more inconsistent than to attach such a reverence to hereditary sentiments. Mr. Kent terminated his discourse by an earnest exhortation.

THE REV. MR. MOORE.

THIS gentleman preached a Sermon at Mr. Faithfull's Chapel, Church Street,

Brighton, from Psalm xx. 2: "O Lord my God, I cried unto thee, and thou hast healed me." He began by observing, that, in the text, David acknowledges what God had done for him; and this grateful disposition to the Almighty was constantly displaying itself: when he met Goliath he was not discouraged by his formidable appearance, but he remembered the former benevolence of God towards him, when he was attending his father's sheep; he could not forget how he was enabled to slay the lion and the bear; and these recollections inspired him with a just hope, that the warrior of Gath would also be subdued by him. It was delightful, therefore, to reflect, what God had done, is doing, and will do, for his faithful people.

Mr. Moore then proceeded to observe, that the text represented sickness as being under the dominion of the Almighty,—it came when God sent it. We were all too apt to look on illness as an accident, but we forget that "affliction does not spring out of the ground, nor trouble out of the dust." Moses, in Deuteronomy, declared, if the law was not kept, that the breakers of it should be visited with sore diseases and of long continuance: and what had been said by certain old divines was also applicable, "So much sin, so much sorrow." Were it not for affliction, we should become earth-bound; we should become more and more lukewarm, till we should wholly neglect the duty we owe the Almighty for upholding us from day to day, and for all his other mercies. But, blessed were the sorrow and affliction that brought us nearer to the kingdom of God and to the throne of the Redeemer: they were messengers of divine mercy to a rebellious people, to urge them to avoid the wrath to come.

The Rev. Gentlemen then said, that if affliction goes where God sends it, so also, when his gracious end is accomplished, will he send his messenger of affliction away. This dispensation of Providence might be traced everywhere; in plagues, in famine, in raging epidemics, and in the various diseases to which mortality is subject: and well would it be for us, if we took advantage of God's kindness towards us in giving us these timely warnings and chastisements: they were gentle corrections to bring us unto him.

The children of God, whatever be their sorrows, had the comfort of his promises to sustain them. The psalmist of Israel had said, "in the multitude of the sorrows that I had in my heart, thy comforts refreshed my soul." And these promises were given to support the people of God in the furnace of affliction. In the Epistle to the Hebrews, the apostle said, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God and keep his commandments." That God would faithfully keep his gracious promises we had ample assurance, for though heaven and earth pass away, yet should his words not pass away.

But if the righteous were so cheerfully sustained under the visitations of the Almighty, what must be the miserable condition of those to whom God was absent in the hour of affliction. They were without any promise to uphold them, or any ray of hope to comfort them: they were on an ocean of despair in a night-foundered skiff, where all was dark and gloomy, and the only anticipation was death.

Mr. Moore, in conclusion, entreated his hearers to become pious disciples of the Saviour, that so they might inherit the gracious promises recorded in the Scriptures; for then we might rely upon being favoured with the parental care of the Almighty, who would see us safely through all afflictions, till we arrived at that place where sin and sorrow dwelt not, and where all was love in the presence of the Lamb.

REVIEW.

The Life of John Wesley, A.M. By RICHARD WATSON. London: John Mason, City Road.

WE do not know of the exertions of any individual which have produced more extensive and permanent effects than those of Mr. Wesley. If we revert to the period when he first commenced the task of attempting the extension of Christianity through the country, we find that he was surrounded by circumstances most adverse to the desires which he indulged and the schemes which he formed. Re-

ligion at that time was in general sunk to a very low ebb, and had assumed a sort of *naturalism* which it seemed impossible to penetrate or arouse. The languidness of the ordinary preaching had produced a corresponding laxity in the morals of even the better sort of people, while the lower classes were almost entirely immersed in gross ignorance and brutal sensuality.* To have made anything like a general effort of amelioration against those impediments with which stupidity, blindness, or the prejudices of the better informed would oppose an extension of practical religious knowledge and influence, certainly required much devotion of piety and stability of zeal. For this effort was Mr. Wesley prepared. He was convinced of the necessity of a great exertion to rescue the lower classes from the degradation into which they were plunged; and was also possessed of a high degree of moral firmness to carry such a design into execution. For upwards of sixty years did he persevere; and there is scarcely a village in England or America that does not bear some trace of the exertions of John Wesley. To say that the efforts which he originated have been beneficial is not to state an opinion, but to declare a fact. By him and his associate preachers religion was carried into the abodes of ignorance and darkness; and a superior morality has thence been gradually extending among the lower classes.

From the services, therefore, which he has performed, the life of Wesley must form a subject of interest to those who are curious to know the history of those distinguished by zeal, perseverance, and piety. In the work of Mr. Watson we have a very agreeable and sufficient sketch of this justly celebrated and good man. Many previous memoirs have been written; but their bulk and expense have prevented them from obtaining general circulation. All that is important or interesting to the ordinary reader is pre-

sented by the work of Mr. Watson. He traces the family, the early education, and religious impressions; the progress at college, and subsequent life of his subject, in a condensed and rapid manner, and in a very correct and agreeable style. The book is really interesting; and though many may differ in opinion from Mr. Wesley and his biographer, none will regret having perused Mr. Watson's "Life."

An Essay on the Origin and Prospects of Man. By THOMAS HOPE. London, John Murray.

THIS work is accounted one of the most extraordinary and striking which has appeared for a long series of years; and if unusualness of subject, and boldness and originality of thought can render a production singular, then has the late Mr. Hope's book a very just claim to the character which it has received. Mr. Hope was known as the author of *Anastasis*, or *Memoirs of a Greek*, a work which obtained a deserved reputation; and the success of the former may in some degree have contributed to the fame of the present production. The *Essay on Man*, discusses some of the most abstract and elevated subjects that can interest human attention or inquiry, and the manner in which they are handled, shews a mind of no ordinary talent or knowledge. One of the principal features of the work is the view which it takes of the origin of man. Those who have adopted the account of creation as given in *Genesis*, have contended that the human stock originated from a single pair; and among those who have maintained this opinion, may be remembered Dr. Wight of New Jersey, U. S., and Dr. Good. Lord Kames asserted the opposite doctrine, and in this he is followed by Mr. Hope, who endeavours to demonstrate that neither climate nor habit are sufficient to produce the diversity of the hue and character of man.

That there are variations in the physical organization, that one nation is distinguished from another in the character of mind, we and all other people are compelled to admit. But because the human family is so diversified, we see no reason to go from the declaration of

* Dr. Johnson says that, about this period, 1730, most of the decent tradesmen of Lichfield used to indulge in habitual intoxication, which was then not thought disreputable to people of substance.—See *Boswell's Tour to the Hebrides*.

Scripture, and assume, with Mr. Hope, a plurality of kind, time, and place in the original creation of man. Climate may not at once be able to produce a diversity of effect in the human species. That it has considerable influence, we are assured, but the experiment of climate, on an extended and sufficient scale, has never yet been tried, and we suppose it never will. But though climate and habit do not give an immediate proof of the proposition of Scripture, they can never be made to demonstrate the opposite supposition.

In discussing the origin of man, Mr. Hope has imagined that different creations, or rather different congregations, of particles adapted to form a human being, occurred at different places and times, and the process of creation, in his opinion, was effected by the agency of matter alone. This seems to hinge closely on the doctrine of some of the ancient Grecian philosophers, as far as the power of matter is concerned: yet Mr. Hope appears to conceive that his view is not discordant from that of the Scriptures, in which an immediate spiritual operation in the act of creation is implied. At present we have not time or space to discuss the subject, but we shall present our readers in future numbers with a full analysis of Mr. Hope's books, and we think that on examination several of his propositions will be found untenable though ingenious and interesting. As the work is not to be procured, we trust that the proposed analysis will prove valuable to our readers.

POETRY.

THE LONGEST DAY.

When Spring the frigid Winter drove,
And smil'd on every budding grove,
We fondly bade the coming hours
Illume the summer's leafy bowers,
And hope was bright and hearts were gay
As light extended with each day.
Sweet was the prospect in each scene,
Where bursting buds and spreading green,
And blushing May with flow'rets white
Inspir'd the swellings of delight.
Precursing hours the visit told;
The ling'ring eve was ting'd with gold,

While morn with early beaming smile,
Soon chas'd the shades from Albion's isle.
Thus laps'd the sun-lit hours away,
Till thy arrival, Longest Day.
Thou camest forth in radiance drest,
Long was thy brilliant reign confest,
Meridian saw thy blazing ray,
And eve retreated far away.
But pauseless time the hours urged on,
Night came at last, and thou wert gone.
The faintly glowing western sea
A mournful tomb appear'd for thee.
Now, on the soon o'er shadow'd plain,
Extending night begins her reign,
And morn with more reluctant wings
The later day-light slowly brings.

How sinks the musing pensive heart
When sunny hours at length depart,
And sad anticipation sees
The snow-clad hill and leafless trees,
And hears the hollow dismal blast
Mourn darkly o'er the summer past!
But why, as circling hours return,
And summer suns again will burn,
Should human hearts with sadness beat
When vernal seasons thus retreat?
The ever-active thinking soul
Connects each portion with its whole,
And thence beholds the narrow'd span
Which fleeting Time allots to man:
The present and the future blend,
And vivid fancy paints the end,
The seasons of life's rapid year
In mental vision then appear,
And all their aspects as they flow,
Pass in a mystical review;
And to the silent mind display
The shortness of man's longest day.

P.

REPERTORY OF FACTS, *Observations, and Intelligence.*

RECEPTION OF TRUTH.

TRUTH has, practically, no abiding place with man till it is received into the heart; it then operates in the life, and increases by new acquisitions without end. It is the food by which his spiritual life is sustained.

DEATH.

No wise man will be contented to die if he thinks he is to go into a state of punishment. Nay, no wise man will be contented to die if he thinks he is to fall into annihilation; for however unhappy a man's existence may be, yet he would rather have it than not exist at all. There

is no rational principle by which a man dies contented but a trust in the mercy of God.—*Johnson.*

THE BRAIN.

THERE is no animal whose brain is a precise counterpart to that of man; and it has hence been conceived, that by attending to the distinctions between the human brain and that of other animals, we might be able to account for their different degrees of intelligence. But the varieties are so numerous, and the parts which are deficient in one animal are found connected with such new combinations, modifications, and deficiencies in others, that it is impossible for us to avail ourselves of any such diversities. Aristotle endeavoured to establish a distinction by laying it down as a maxim that man has the largest brain of all animals in proportion to the size of his body; a maxim which has been almost universally received from his own time to the present period. But it has of late years, and upon a more extensive cultivation of comparative anatomy, been found to fail in various instances: for while the brain of several species of the ape kind bears as large a proportion to the body as that of man, the brain of several kinds of birds bears a proportion still larger.—*Good.*

THE USE OF LEARNING.

LEARNING, when one applies to it with a sincere purpose of improving his nature, and of rendering himself more useful to his fellow-creatures, is of all earthly possessions the most valuable; but still let it be remembered, that piety and virtue are the chief principles for which man was made, and the only certain means of happiness. The time is fast approaching, when learning and all the ornaments of human life shall disappear for ever, and nothing be found of any real value but the Divine approbation. If that is secured, all is well; and without that, all other attainments are nothing.—*Beattie.*

NATURAL MUMMIES.

When bodies are buried beneath the

hot and arid sands of Egypt or Arabia, with a sultry sun shining, almost without ceasing, upon the sandy surface, the heat hereby produced is so considerable as to raise the whole of the fluids of the animal system to the cuticle, whence they are immediately and voraciously drunk up by the bibulous sands that surround it; or, piercing their interstices, are thrown off into the atmosphere in the form of insensible vapour. In consequence of which, when a body thus buried is dug up a few weeks after its interment, instead of being converted into its original elements, it is found changed into a natural mummy, altogether as hard and as capable of preservation as any artificial mummy, prepared with the costliest septics employed on such occasions.—*Good.*

"STATE OF NATURE!"

THERE is no creature on the earth, in any climate or zone (says Von Langsdorff) that bears such an enmity to its own species as man. Let us only cast our eyes over the history of the globe, in the most barren wastes, and in the most fertile countries, among the most savage as well as the most cultivated nations, in short, in every part of the world, wherever man exists, and we shall find him seeking to destroy his own species: he is every where, *by nature*, savage. The sweet and tender feelings of affection and love, of friendship and attachment, even that of parents to their children and of children towards their parents, I have, alas, very seldom found among a rude, uncivilized people. The African hordes not only bring their prisoners taken in battle but their own children to market. The same thing is done by the Kirgis, the Calmucs, and many other inhabitants of the north-western coast of America, and here, at Nakatiwa (in the South Seas), a woman would very readily have given a child at her breast, which had been asked by us in jest, in exchange for a piece of iron.—*Voyages and Travels.*

London:—Sold by W. SIMPKIN & R. MARSHALL, Stationers' Hall Court, Ludgate St., where Communications to the Editor may be addressed: Sold also by G. WIGHTMAN, Paternoster Row; T. GRIFFITHS, Wellington Street, Strand; and all other Booksellers.